CLAIMS

1. Use of depletants selected from the group containing B-cell depletants, T-cell depletants and B- and T-cell depletants for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment or prevention of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy in infected humans or animals.

2. Use according to claim 1, characterized in that said B-cell depletants comprise anti B-cell antibodies.

3. Use according to claim 2, characterized in that said anti B-cell antibodies comprise anti-μmM antibodies.

4. Use according to claim 2, characterized in that said anti B-cell antibodies comprise LR1 antibodies.

5. Use according to claim 2, characterized in that said anti B-cell antibodies comprise B220 antibodies.

6. Use according to claim 2, characterized in that said anti B-cell antibodies comprise rituximab.

7. Use according to claim 1, characterized in that said anti B-cell depletants comprise chemical compounds.

8. Use according to claim 7, characterized in that said chemical compounds comprise imexon.

9. Use according to claim 7, characterized in that said chemical compounds comprise ciamexone.

10. Use according to claim 1, characterized in that said T-cell depletants comprise anti T-cell antibodies.

11. Use according to claim 10, characterized in that said anti T-cell antibodies comprise Thy1.2 antibodies.

12. Use according to claim 11, characterized in that said T-cell depletants comprise chemical compounds.

13. Use according to claim 12, characterized in that said T-cell depletants comprise cyclosporin A.

14. Use according to claim 1, characterized in that said B- and T-cell depletants comprise a combination of cyclophosphamide and dexamethasone either in a combined dosage form or in separate dosage forms.

15. A product comprising cyclophosphamide and dexamethasone as a combined preparation for the simultaneous, separate or sequential use in the treatment or prevention of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy in infected humans or animals.

16. Use of body fluid or tissue derived cell or cell debris containing products for the prevention of transmissible encephalopathy spread in human or animal populations characterized in that said body fluid or tissue derived products are selected from the group containing B-cell depleted, T-cell depleted and B- and T-cell depleted body fluid or tissue derived products.

17. Buffy coat, characterized in that it has been depleted *in vitro* of the cells selected from the group containing B-cells, T-cells and B- and T-cells.

18. Method for the provision of a buffy coat as claimed in

claim 17 characterized in that said buffy coat is contacted with antibodies selected from the group containing anti B-cell, anti T-cell and anti B- and T-cell antibodies that are linked to a solid support.

19. Method for the purification of plasma characterized in that such plasma or a precursor used in the preparation thereof is contacted with antibodies selected from the group containing anti B-cell, anti T-cell and anti B- and T-cell antibodies that are linked to a solid support.

20. Method for the manufacture of plasma or buffy coat, characterized in that said plasma or buffy coat are isolated from B-cell deficient animals.

21. Method according to claim 20, characterized in that said B-cell deficient animals are produced by removing or inhibiting expression of B-cell related genes contained therein.

22. Assay method for the determination of the presence of tse-infected cells selected from the group containing B-cells, T-cells and B- and T-cells in humans or animals or in body fluid or tissue derived products isolated therefrom, characterized in that said method comprises the steps of: extracting the cells selected from the group comprising B-cells, T-cells and B- and T-cells from body fluids or from tissue or from products derived therefrom and inoculating said cells into the cerebrum of a test animal, development of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy in said test animal indicating presence of said tse-infected cells.

23. Assay method for the determination of the presence of

tse-infected cells selected from the group containing B-cells, T-cells and B- and T-cells in humans or animals or in body fluid or tissue derived products isolated therefrom, characterized in that the cells are subjected to a Western blot analysis with anti-PrP antibody either directly and after having been digested with proteinase K.

24. Assay method for the monitoring of the progress of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy or of the therapy against such disease in humans or animals characterized in that is comprises the steps of claims 22 or 23.

25. An antibody directed against tse-infected cells selected from the group containing B-cells and T-cells, characterized in that said antibody shows specificity to a tse-infected marker of each of the cells selected from the group containing B-cells and T-cells and is obtainable by immunization of host animals with tse-infected cells each selected from the group containing B-cells and T-cells.

26. Use of the antibody according to claim 25 in a diagnostic assay.

27. A medicament comprising the antibody of claim 25.

28. A ligand capable of identification of tse-infected cells selected from the group containing B-cells and T-cells, characterized in that specific interaction between said ligand and said tse-infected cell is based on the infectivity of said cell.

29. Use of a ligand according to claim 28 in a method of

analysis of said cells.

30. Use according to claim 29 characterized in that said cells are intact.

31. Use according to claim 30 in histochemical analysis of the whole cells selected from the group containing B-cells and T-cells mounted on microscope slides.

ADD A1

ADD C1

Add B1